

Safeguarding the Nation's Children . . .

Stories from the Child Nutrition Archives

SCHOOL CAFETERIA

National Food Service Management Institute
THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI



*Personnel are
the Key Ingredients
in a Good
School Lunch Program*

—THELMA FLANAGAN



Elisabeth Beavers

In one school, my duty was to tell the principal she could not serve beans every day and that they had to vary the menu. It was a small eight-grade school. The schools, along with their reimbursement claims they returned to the agency, had to include the menu and receipts for food purchases. My director, Drew V. Langley, noticed the school had not purchased meat and other products, including milk, needed to comply. It was my duty to go into this particular school and explain to the administrator that the menu had to be varied.

Upon entering the school, the first thing that all three of us saw was a little boy with a girl's coat on and the sleeves came up to his elbows. It was far too small. He was just into it enough to try to keep warm. This was in December and very cold. We knew this was the beginning of what we were going to see in that school.

We visited with the principal and discussed the school lunch program. We planned to have lunch but I felt guilty as I felt those children needed that food. The principal was preparing the lunch. She was cooking pinto beans on a pot-bellied stove in their classroom. She explained that she brings in milk when she comes in on Monday morning and they were able to keep enough milk for two days. Then, they serve meals without milk.

They had no refrigeration. The lunch was meager. I turned to Mr. Good and Mrs. Nance and said "I have no intention of telling them they cannot serve beans. Now, what do you think?" They said "We're not either." We could at least see they were getting something for their stomachs. When we returned, Mr. Langley asked "What did they say when you told them they couldn't serve beans every day." I said, "Mr. Langley, I did not tell them they couldn't." I advised him of the circumstances and said I was going down to the Welfare Office and tell them that they needed to get some more beans to that school because they were almost out.



Ora Mae Reeves

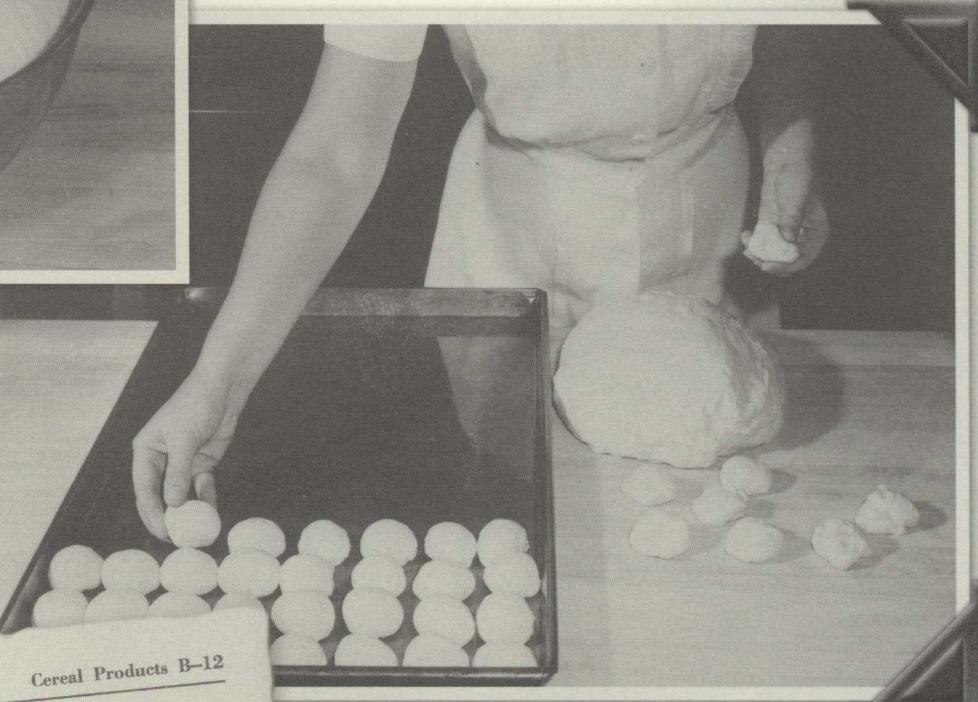
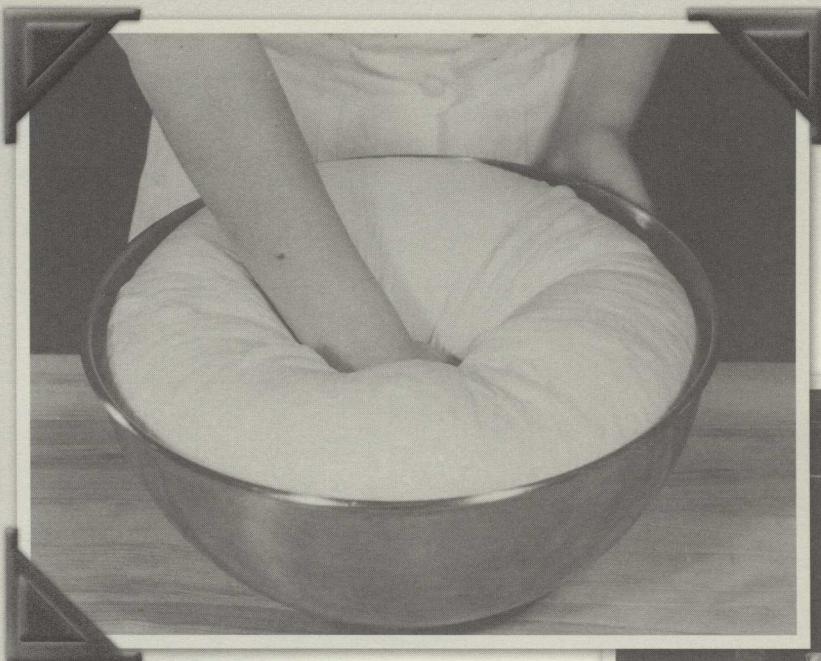
*What was your favorite part of helping out
with the lunches at school?*

*I*t was just seeing the hungry children fed, knowing that some of them probably had not had any breakfast. And they enjoyed it. You know, back then you couldn't buy lard, you couldn't buy sugar. We got a lot of meat from the government, just side meat. And we'd fry that out and use that grease to cook with. They were just throwing that meat away and my sister-in-law told them the kids would eat the meat. So we tried it and they LOVED that meat with cornbread and vegetables. We didn't waste nothin'; it was all saved.



Offie Karnes

I was the first manager in the city of Roanoke to do a breakfast program for one year to see how the students acted that had had breakfast, and how they studied. It was such a great success that from that year on every school had a breakfast program...It was VERY successful, and we always had a good nutritious meal for the students at breakfast-time. The child who came to school without food, they always were able to eat breakfast. We had good participation in breakfast.



ROLLS

Cereal Products B-12

Bread

Ingredients	100 rolls		For rolls	Directions
	Weights	Measures		
Compressed yeast or Active dry yeast	6-3/4 oz. or 3-1/4 oz.	3/4 cup 2 Tbsp. or 1/2 cup 2 Tbsp. 3-1/2 cups		
Warm water (tem- perature 110° F.)				
All-purpose flour	7 lb 4 oz.	7-1/4 qt.		
Nonfat dry milk	6-1/2 oz.	1-1/3 cups ▲		
Sugar	11-1/2 oz.	1-2/3 cups		
Salt	2-3/4 oz.	1/4 cup		
Shortening, softened.	11-1/2 oz.	1-2/3 cups		
Water (tempera- ture 65° F.)		1 qt 1/2 cup		

NOTE: All ingredients and utensils must be warmed to room temperature.

1. Dissolve yeast in warm water.
2. Blend dry ingredients 1 minute in a 20-qt mixer bowl on low speed. Add fat.
3. Add water while mixing on low speed with dough hook for 1 minute. Add yeast mixture while mixing on low speed for 4 minutes. Mix on medium speed for 10 minutes.
4. Set bowl of dough in a warm place (90° F) about 30 minutes until doubled in volume.
5. Punch down dough. Cut or "pinch off" 2-oz rolls. Shape and place on lightly greased sheet pans (about 18 by 26 inches).
6. Let rise in a warm place (90° F) for 30 minutes.

(Continued on back)

Mary Nix

I was asked to be the Manager of Sprayberry High School. When the principal, when I was talking to the principal I said, now look. I can keep the records; surely I can do it for one school, I've been doing it for ten. I can buy the food and plan the menus, I've learned a whole lot in four years, but I can't cook. He said, it won't matter; Ms. Bessie can cook anything. So he hired me knowing that I couldn't cook anything. I learned a lot that year; I really learned a lot that year. I also learned Ms. Bessie wasn't going to make any rolls too. I really did. We were going to feed fifty teachers; I'd said a whole lot about those fifty teachers and about the school made rolls. About nine o'clock I said, Ms. Bessie, you better make those rolls. She said, I ain't never made no rolls and I ain't a startin' now. My first thought was well, I'll just have to tell her she has to. I couldn't do that; I couldn't cook. So I thought, well, I'll just go to the grocery store; I can buy fifty rolls. I thought, I can't do that, I've said too much about school made rolls, so I had to do it. I found this recipe; it sounded like a whole lot. I cut it in half thank god. I found this mixer sitting in the floor over there. All we had up in Gordon County sat on the table, it was biggest thing I ever saw. But I remember how I told everybody to make rolls now. You know, it's like going from telling to doing, there's a whole lot of difference. I knew I had to gather up my stuff, weigh and measure, did all that, put it in that mixer. It was so hot in that kitchen, no fan, no air conditioner, no nothing. I turned that mixer on; I knew without a doubt, I could tell when it got to look like bubble gum and it cleaned the sides of the bowl. I turned around and it wasn't long that stuff was coming up out of that pan over the sides, down in the floor. I cut that mixer off and I cleaned that up hoping nobody would see it, and then I went and turned that mixer back on because it certainly stuck to everything. It didn't clean the bowl up a bit. I started putting tomato in and cucumber in and cantaloupe seeds, stuff in that galvanized garbage can. Five times I turned off that mixer and cleaned up the mess and put it all in that galvanized garbage can and put the lid on it. Prettiest rolls you ever seen. I made up thirteen hundred rolls to feed fifty teachers. I rolled out rolls 'till I thought my arm was going to drop off and I put the rest of it in the garbage can, put the lid on it. Well, quiet dignity of the, serenity of the dining room. Fifty teachers, twenty-five of them sitting down, twenty-five in line. Do you know what it sounds like when a galvanized garbage can lid hits the floor, and out comes all of this dough with all that other stuff in it right in front of the teachers? Till this day they still ask me about the day I made rolls at school. But it was a good year, I learned a lot that year; I learned a whole lot that year. I think I probably was a better person when I finished that year.



Thelma Flanagan

We invariably found that the personnel are the key ingredient in a good school lunch program. Well trained, conscientious personnel. The facilities and the funds without good personnel don't produce a good school lunch program...We need to continually reevaluate goals, practices, and adjust to reflect the new findings in nutrition, and education and child feeding programs in operating methods and practices...





Doris Mau

*W*e used to cook the whole bird the day before, and in the afternoon de-bone it, and put it in the refrigerator for the Wednesday before Thanksgiving, because many of our students didn't have turkey for Thanksgiving, and that was the only turkey they were going to have. And I wasn't going to give it to them a week ahead or two days ahead. I wanted them to have it the day before Thanksgiving. Otherwise they wouldn't have any turkey.



Earnestine Camp

In 1943 at the start of the war effort, the WPA program was phased out because women could go to the war plants and work. The Superintendent [of Yellville, Arkansas, schools] said, "Well, we just can't have it, we don't have anybody to prepare the food." And so I told him that I would. I hated to see the children not to be able to have food, because we had about five hundred children in that school and it was really a poverty area, even though we didn't know it was poverty. That school, before I arrived there, had set up their lunch program down under the bleachers in the basement of a building. And each child had brought his own plate, and cup, and saucer, and knife, and fork, and that kind of thing. The ag. teacher and their group had built the benches, and they had some meager equipment. In fact, the equipment included number ten washtubs that they used for washing the dishes, and, also, the ladies would make up hot roll dough the night before and leave it in those washtubs. I remember seeing the dough that had risen up and just gone over the side of the tub onto the table. The Lord blessed us that we didn't kill a bunch of children that way. But anyway, when [the Superintendent] said, "well, we just can't have the program," I said, "I would like to try it." He said, "well, it's your baby, remember." And I've been rocking that baby for the last sixty years.



Paul Schmitz

In 1967 we got the biggest hurricane ever to hit the coast of Texas, Beulah. Absolutely drowned out the Rio Grande Valley. So we decided that we had to fly food in. They looked around for volunteers that would go down on the first planeload of food. You know, I was extremely young and extremely dumb and I said, "Sure, that sounds like a lot of fun to me." So. Anyway, we loaded up in Dallas, seven planeloads of food, and the planes we were using were some that were military, that had just got back from Vietnam. All the crews were just Vietnam, well in 1967 we were still fighting in Vietnam, so these guys were straight out of Vietnam, and they said, "Alright, no sweat, we will get you down there." So anyway, we got off and we flew, and it was rough, but I had rougher, until we got to about Corpus Christi and then tornadoes in the air. I could see, at one time I could see seven tornadoes in the air at the same time. Three of the planes either got hit or had to divert and try to land in Corpus but we went on into Arlington and when we got there they told us the runway was closed because there was five inches of water on the runway. And the pilot just, we heard over the intercom, they said, "Captain, they said the runway is closed," and he said, "Huh, it ain't closed to me." He said, "It looks like I can see a dry spot right over there," and he did, he set that thing down like you wouldn't believe. But one of our guys had been down there for a couple of weeks earlier and he said when I got off that plane that I was whiter than the color of the plane. But that was food distribution in the early days. The governor came out and had his picture taken. The pilot got off the plane with his crew wearing their, they are wearing their Vietnam garb, their battle garb, has got a pistol on and his knife stuck in his back. He takes one look around and said, "Which way is Mexico?" and heads out and I never saw him again, because I came home on a different plane several days later. But food distribution was always a big part of it. Another quick food distribution story. Another hurricane we had down in Corpus Christi, and they called and they said, "We can't get hold of anybody in the schools, but we need some of the food. What can we do?" And I was in Corpus Christi, and I said, "Well, I will meet you at the warehouse." We got to the warehouse and this guy worked for the District but he felt like he didn't have any authority. He said, "Well, what can we do?" and I said, "Break that lock. Don't worry about it. We'll worry about it later." And so they did and we loaded the food out to them and got the food moving. That's something that you had to do in emergencies, had to keep the food moving.

FOODS FROM FARMS



FOOD FROM FARMS



Betty Bender

*J*ust think about the first time I ever saw a school lunch menu. At that time, you must have two pats of butter and school lunches you fixed one menu with meatloaf, mashed potatoes, green beans, and apple pie, and hot biscuits. And that was your menu. And if kids didn't like that we had a peanut butter sandwich on the side and they could pick up what they wanted and you sold little if any ala cart sold in schools. It was strictly Type A and that was it. And that was the way you performed. It's not that way any more. Kids have choices. There is a lot of ala cart that's sold against school lunch because we are trying to stay afloat financially. And certainly we are not putting two pats of butter on every kid's tray.

"For these, we are grateful."
Cafeteria Staff



Nola Mae Jones, Corine Theodore, Annie Mae Jones, Lula Mae Childs, Mae Frances Norman, and Geneva Massenberg.

Lorita Myles

I do want to talk about [a lady who worked in the school food service when I was] in high school. I used to share [her story] with people when I used to go out and talk to food service people. She was the head of the food service in high school. At that time we had two entrees to choose from. And we thought that was great, to go from elementary school where you had just the menu, ... you had no selection, no variety; to go where you had two entrees to choose from. But she was a very pleasant person, outgoing person, and we always knew, when I think back on that, that she enjoyed what she was doing. There was always a pleasant smile there for us when we would go through that line.



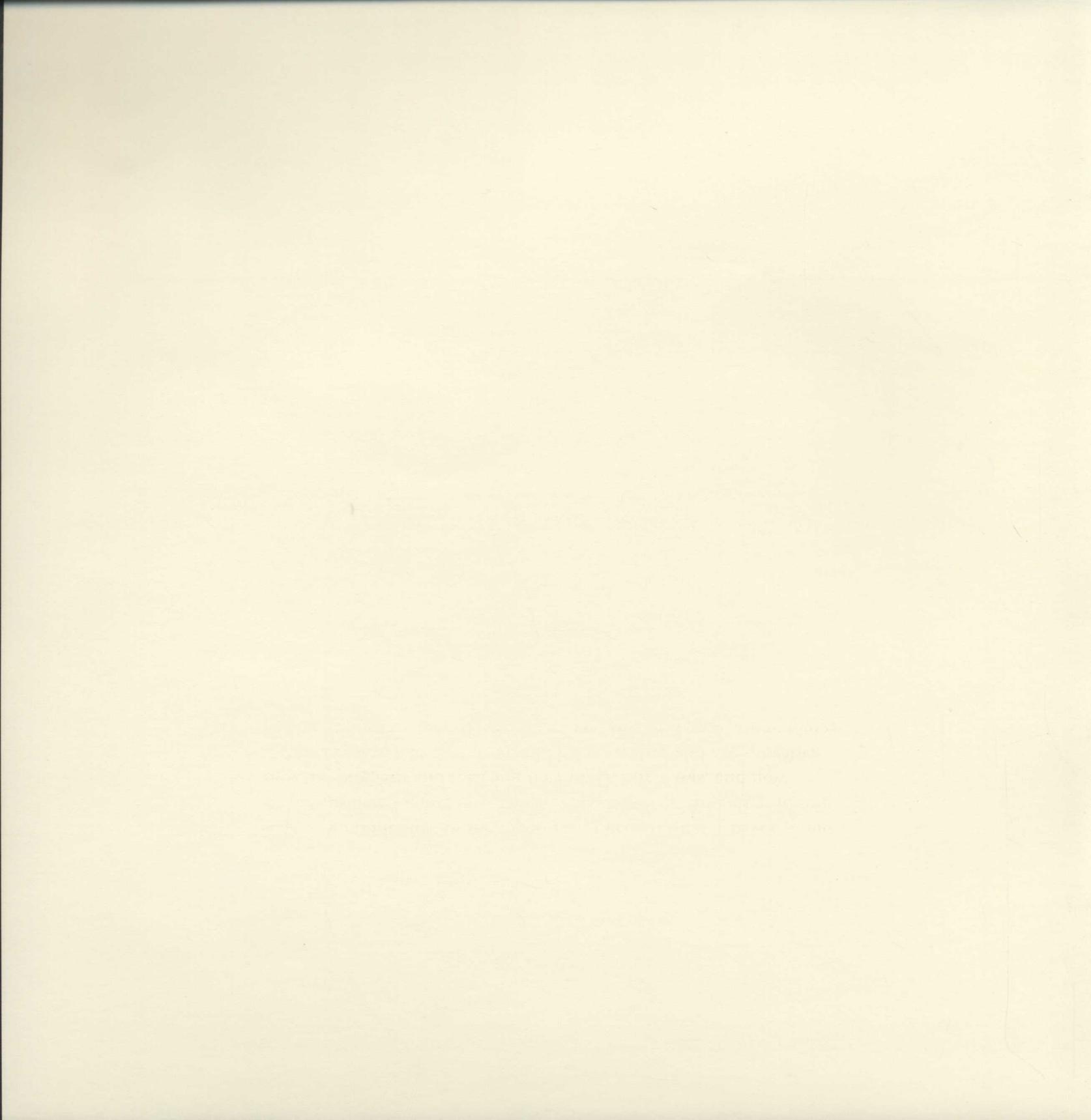
Gertrude Applebaum

A good-looking salesman came in and sold me a carload of tuna fish. The relevance to that story was I had absolutely no idea the size of what a carload was. Two weeks later the truck arrived and the drivers started unloading the cases of tuna fish, I said, "What is this?" and they said, "It's the cases of tuna fish you ordered!" I tried to return the tuna fish—called the company and they would not take it back. None of my friends would help me out; you don't have friends when something like that happens. It was probably the best experience I have ever had. Had I been a private business, I would have gone out of business. I had an inventory of tuna fish and once I paid for it, my bank account was depleted. I had money sitting on the shelf. Nobody wanted to be paid in tuna fish. I offered my employees tuna fish and they said no; they wanted cash. I learned that you better plan your menu first; I learned that forecasting what your needs are is important. I learned that people don't like tuna fish that much, so serving it maybe once a month is adequate, which means a case would have been enough. I learned from that experience what it means to be in business, what it means to forecast and only order what you need. What it means to get student input, and what it means to have a small inventory. It took me ten years to get rid of it. One positive note was at least it didn't become a government commodity. There are some experiences one never forgets; this is one of them.

Shirley Watkins

I think Marie Austin, who was a good friend of mine and was an area manager in School Food Service in Memphis, was a solid mentor for me. Had it not been for her, I never would have considered going into School Food Service. And after getting into the program and realizing how much fun it was, and how exciting it was, and that you could be as creative and as innovative as you wanted to be in the program, and that you were still working with children, and all the fun things that you could do in working with meal programs, was very exciting and very fascinating. ... People stayed in the jobs forever, so there was not the turnover that we currently experience in Child Nutrition Programs.

		Date _____					
		MEAT OR MEAT SUBSTITUTE	VEGETABLE AND/OR FRUIT	BREAD	BUTTER OR MARGARINE	MILK	ADDITIONAL FOOD
Number of Lunches Served	Children Adult	2 oz. cooked or canned lean meat, poultry, or fish; or 2 oz. cheese; or 1 egg; or $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked dried beans or peas; or 4 T. peanut butter. These foods must be served in a main dish or main dish and one other menu item.	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup serving consisting of two or more vegetables or fruits, or both. Full strength vegetable or fruit juice may be counted to meet not more than one-fourth cup of this requirement.	1 or more portions bread, muffins, or bread made of enriched flour or cereal.	2 teaspoons of butter or margarine. Specify amount and way in which it is used. 1# for 48 lunches.	$\frac{1}{2}$ pint of whole milk as a beverage.	Additional foods for energy needs as rice, spaghetti, macaroni, cake, ice cream, pudding, syrup, jelly, etc.
INDICATE AMOUNTS OF FOOD USED TO MEET TYPE A LUNCH REQUIREMENTS							
MONDAY	615	Hat Dog Pork & Beans	Cabbage Slaw Fruit Cup	Bun		$\frac{1}{2}$ pt	
TUESDAY	635	Meat Loaf $60\#$ pork $60\#$ beef	String Beans Tomato Slice	Corn Bread	$\frac{1}{2}$ pt Butter	$\frac{1}{2}$ pt	Cake
WEDNESDAY	640	Chicken Pie P.B Crackers	Buttered Egg. Pies Pear Half	Hot Biscuits	9# Butter	$\frac{1}{2}$ pt	
THURSDAY	674	Hamburger $1\frac{1}{2}$ # meat	onion Carrot Strips Tom. Purple Plums	Bun	pt Butter	$\frac{1}{2}$ pt	Pot Slip
			Buttered Corn	Hot Biscuits			





National Food Service Management Institute

THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI

6 Jeanette Phillips Drive • P.O. Drawer 188 • University, MS 38677-0188

Phone: 800-321-3054 • Fax: 800-321-3054 • E-mail: nfsmi@olemiss.edu • Web site: www.nfsmi.org